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AMERICAN ART NEWS

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PUBLISHED BY
THE AMERICAN ART NEWS CO., Inc.
 786 Sixth Avenue, New York
 Entered as second-class matter, February 5, 1909,
 at New York Post Office, under the Act,
 March 3, 1879.
 Published weekly from Oct. 15 to June 30, inclusive.
 Monthly during July, August and September.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES	
YEAR IN ADVANCE	\$4.00
Canada	4.35
Foreign Countries	4.75
Single Copies	.15

WHERE AMERICAN ART NEWS MAY BE OBTAINED IN NEW YORK

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 Bottom, News Agent - 32 Duke St., St. James, S. W.

PARIS

American Art News Office - 26 Rue Jacob
 Brentano's - - - 37 Avenue de l'Opera

Vol. XX JUNE 17, 1922 No. 36

MUSIC FIRST: ART SECOND

Up to the present the project for the great music, dramatic and art center of the city shows plainly that the inclusion of the pictorial and plastic arts in the municipal scheme was an afterthought on the part of the two city officials intrusted with the formulation of the plans for this center and was probably due to the praiseworthy efforts of Harry W. Watrous, president of the National Academy Association, in calling the attention of Mayor Hylan's special committee to the needs of art in the way of a suitable exhibition building in New York.

It is known that music patrons of the city initiated and carried through the movement which resulted in the New York Legislature enacting the law in March of this year which gave power to the city to condemn a site "for a building to be used for the advancement of education in music, drama and other arts" and to issue corporate stock to pay for such a site. But the "other arts" find little mention in a letter covering the project written by City Chamberlain Berolzheimer and Secretary Joseph Haag of the Board of Estimate and Apportionment to Mayor Hylan on February 27 last, the whole tenor of that communication being of concern with musical and dramatic art alone.

The writers of the letter, who comprise the Mayor's special committee in charge of this plan, refer to a building to be erected "for the advancement of musical education and entertainment" which was enlarged upon by Mr. Haag to include "an opera house with its attendant requirements." Music was to furnish "the nucleus" around which all proposed war or peace memorials "could be gathered." The local operatic, concert and conservatory of music situation was set forth at length and it was shown that by the erection of an opera house and music building all these musical efforts could be coordinated. "In our judgment," the letter continued, "there should also be included in this center provision for the education in and production of the classic drama," a building "to accommodate a 'Musical Village' as expressed by one of our distinguished citizens and patrons of music."

Then follows a sentence reading: "Provision might also be made for a salon at which the native artist could exhibit his creations"; but as the letter goes on to refer to music and the drama once more it is not easy to make out just what kind of an artist this cryptic phrase refers to. If it means a practitioner of the pictorial or plastic arts, it does so only in the most casual way, and fails to show any serious appreciation of the enormous part played in the life of New York by these arts, both in an educational way and as a source of attracting hundreds of thousands of visitors annually to the city. As the letter ends on the note of the "democratization of music and the drama," we have every reason to believe that the inclusion of an art building

in the center was an afterthought due to Mr. Watrous' efforts.

Now that such a structure is included in the plans made by Arnold W. Brunner for the Mayor's committee, two important things remain. The first of these is the raising of the funds to build the art exhibition gallery, the second is the question as to who is to control its management. Mr. Watrous, in view of his position as president of the National Academy Association, naturally hopes that his organization can raise sufficient funds to erect such a structure as is planned for the music and art center and would be the directing power in its management. Robert Henri, speaking for himself, but voicing the known opinions of our independent artists (those opposed to academic ideas as to jury control of exhibitions), said that he would approve of an art building in the center if it were made an "absolutely open forum for the expression of all art." As Mr. Watrous has already expressed the idea that such a building should be open to all sorts of art and industrial exhibitions, under a certain amount of control, it would appear that our academic and independent schools were of one mind as to this exhibition building.

It would not be human if there were not a certain amount of musical, dramatic and art politics entering into the management of the three buildings after they are constructed. To expect otherwise would be foolish. The great thing to seek for is to have such politics directed to the greatest possible liberality in the management of all three buildings, but particularly in the one devoted to the field in which THE AMERICAN ART NEWS and its readers are most concerned—the pictorial and plastic arts.

PERCENTAGES AND ART

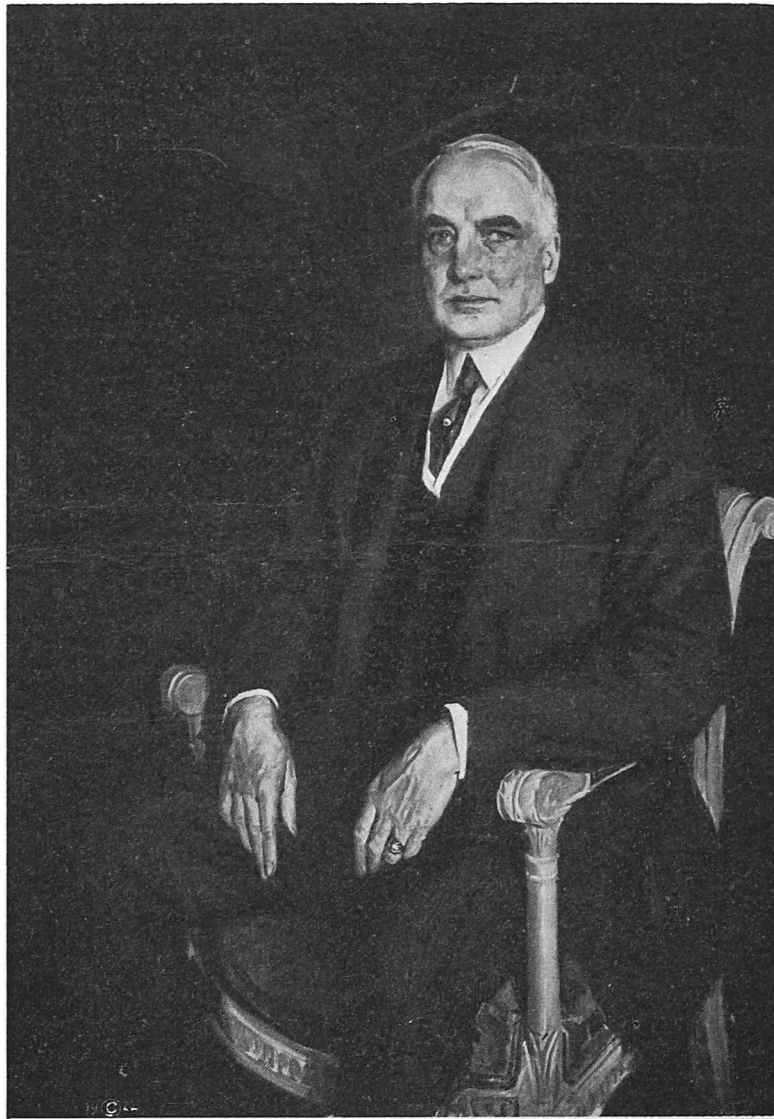
Although Representative George P. Darrow is a Philadelphia member of the Pennsylvania delegation in Congress, there is little of his city's accustomed liberality toward art reflected in the bill he proposes to introduce in the House of Representatives to establish a control of art in public buildings on a percentage basis. His proposal that "seven per cent. of the total appropriation made for any public building constructed of stone or other hard materials shall be spent for art, that is, sculpture, mural painting, glass mosaic or stained glass," might have been liberal years ago. But in the present stage of American public building architecture, this establishing of a definite percentage for expenditures for art would appear to be an inhibition rather than an encouragement.

Expressed in figures, if the total appropriation for a public building were \$1,000,000, this would limit the amount to be spent on art to \$70,000, while on a \$5,000,000 building the limit would be \$350,000. The smaller figure might be excessive for a post office or a custom house, for example, while the larger figure might be inadequate for a great structure housing the courts and other departmental activities of the country. In addition to this, the establishing of a law making a certain percentage of art, of the kinds specified, an essential of every public building would tend to affect the architect unfavorably. He might not care to embellish his design with these things in some cases, but the politicians could be depended upon to see that the money was spent.

It is the politician who is speaking in the clause which provides that "the artist selected in each case shall be a citizen of the State in which the building is to be erected." This is a clause for home consumption purely, and is meant to show how Congress looks after the "home folks." The fact that a State might not have an artist, who was a citizen, big enough to do a certain work of art would not count if this measure became law. Native talent would be the only kind considered; and if the particular State got the worst of the deal—from the viewpoint of art—the politicians would not care.

The requirement of a bond from each artist amounting to fifty per cent. of the amount of the contract "for the faithful and prompt performance of the work" is an unnecessary provision and one putting a burden on the artist wholly unwarranted by the experiences of artists with the government. It is a matter of record that American artists have suffered heavily at the hands of the Federal and State governments through delayed payments for their work in the past, but it would be difficult to recall a case in which our authorities have suffered any losses at the hands of artists. It is to be hoped that Congressman Darrow will take counsel with some of his artist constituents in Philadelphia.

Christy Paints President Harding



PORTRAIT OF PRESIDENT HARDING By HOWARD CHANDLER CHRISTY

Howard Chandler Christy's latest portrait, that of President Harding, is a happy combination of the "official" and the human aspect of the President. The charming dignity so long associated with Mr. Harding's presence and character is the dominant note in Mr. Christy's canvas, combined with an agreeable color scheme, the necessary low tones of the black

coat and striped trousers being relieved by the ruddy flesh tones, reflecting the President's fondness for outdoor life, and the silvery white hair. The easy pose of the figure suggests the element of patience in Mr. Harding's character, a quality for which he was noted before it might have been imposed upon him by the demands of his high office.

Studio Gossip

Harrison Fisher is on a ranch in California for his annual vacation. He is very much interested in etching at present and may give an exhibition of his work in that medium before long.

Ernest de Weerth, who has been on a tour through Germany, has returned to Paris to join his mother at the Hotel Ritz before going to London.

Manuel Barthold, painter, has just completed and delivered a large portrait of Hugh Campbell Wallace, former American Ambassador in Paris. The portrait was exhibited in the Salon de la Société des Artistes Français last year, but has since undergone slight changes.

Laura Coombs Hills, miniature painter, is holding an exhibition of her work at the Knoedler Galleries in Paris.

Arthur Freedlander has gone to Martha's Vineyard for the summer.

Helen McCarthy is painting flower pictures at Chappaqua, N. Y.

Emil A. Gruppe has left his 55th street studio and gone to Woodstock for the summer. He will conduct an outdoor life class with the nude model posing in the Sappatch and along the shores of the brook.

Gordon Stevenson is painting a portrait of Colin Campbell, who recently appeared as the Parson in "Marjolaine."

J. Mortimer Lichtenauer, portrait painter, and Mrs. Lichtenauer sailed for Europe on the *Baltic* on June 10. They will remain abroad for about a year, spending their time mostly in Algiers and Italy.

Susan Ricker Knox is painting at her studio in York Harbor, Me. Miss Knox's exhibition of immigrant groups, which has recently been shown at the Milwaukee Art Institute and in Lynchburg and Richmond, Va., is at present at the Memorial Gallery, Portland, Me. It will be shown at Chautauqua, N. Y., during the meeting of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, June 20 to 30.

Among the artists sailing for Europe on Saturday, June 10, were Henri Caro Delvaille, who went to France on the *Savoie*; Malvina Hoffman, sculptor, on the *Baltic*, and Dixie Selden, of Cincinnati, on the *Noordam*.

Caroline W. Pitkin will leave New York the last of June for her studio at Ogunquit, Maine.

Louis Kronberg has gone abroad for a stay of several months.

Harry Farlow, portrait painter, has gone to Lakewood, N. J., where he is commissioned to

paint Sylvia, the oldest daughter of Kingdon Gould.

Maurice Molarsky will spend the summer in Europe.

Pearl Hill, of Philadelphia, will spend the summer motoring in England and on the Continent.

Charles P. Gruppe is painting around Rochester, N. Y., and plans a trip to Holland later in the season. A recent picture, "Old Bridge in The Hague Woods," has been purchased by an art collector resident in Canada. The work of Mr. Gruppe is now being shown at the Thurbur Galleries, Chicago.

Mr. and Mrs. Philip Whitney, of Philadelphia, have taken a cottage at Nantucket for the summer.

Violet Oakley's exhibition of her work in the New York Public Library will continue during June and July.

Beatrice Fenton is working on a design for the medal to be presented by the Artists' Week Association of Philadelphia to the Chestnut street merchants who won prizes for the best windows during the recent display.

Robert Henri will spend the summer in Santa Fe, N. M., and vicinity.

Randall Davey is in the New York Hospital convalescing after an operation for appendicitis performed June 7.

G. Frank Muller, artist and critic, will spend the summer at Rockport, Mass.

Fern I. Coppedge will leave shortly for Lumberville, Pa., where she has taken a house for the summer. Mrs. Coppedge recently sold a picture of Gloucester Harbor to a Philadelphia collector.

Obituary

VLAHO BUKOVAC

Vlaho Bukovac, Yugoslav painter, is dead at Prague, where he had been professor at the Academy of Arts since 1902. He was sixty-seven years old and followed the style of the French classical school. His work was well known in England, one of his best known paintings there being an altar piece in a church at Harrogate. Just before his death, from hemorrhage of the brain, he returned to Prague from Belgrade where he painted a portrait of the king.

DON AURELIANO DE BERUETE

Don Aureliano de Beruete y Moret, director of the Prado Museum and noted art critic, is dead in Madrid.